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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 6 August 2007 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Over the past few weeks, the relentless military actions by Israel, the occupying Power, have continued against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The belligerent action of the Israeli occupying Power has repeatedly shown the utter disregard for the worth of Palestinian life and has never missed a chance to enforce this belligerence by overlooking criminal and outright brutal acts committed by Israeli soldiers and/or settlers against defenceless Palestinian civilians.

On 5 August 2007, illegal Israeli settlers in Al-Kahlil's Old City intentionally ran over 22-year-old Numan Al-Nazer as he was passing by a street inside the Old City that has been closed to Palestinian traffic for years by Israeli occupation forces. At the same time, these settlers set the building housing Al-Kahlil Reconstruction Committee ablaze along with two other homes in the area. The violent illegal settlers, whose abuse and attacks against ordinary Palestinian families are well documented and widely condemned, also prevented firefighters from reaching the neighbourhood to put out the fires. They then moved on to Al-Aqtab mosque, which they desecrated. Israeli soldiers and policemen did not stop the settlers from carrying out their crazed rampage against the city and its residents. In fact, they stood by and watched as these settlers committed grave crimes that they would have been quick to stop had they been committed against fellow Israelis.

Such grave aggression took place against a city already destroyed and crippled for the past seven years by the draconian measures of the Israeli occupation authorities. Perhaps more alarming, these actions took place on the eve of the joint meeting between President Mahmoud Abbas and the Israeli Prime Minister in Jericho. In fact, while the final preparatory arrangements were taken for this important meeting, Israeli occupation forces carried out an incursion into Nablus City and arrested several Palestinians in Al-Ain refugee camp.

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Moreover, three days prior to this incident, Israeli settlers, also in Al-Kahlil, attacked a United Nations car transporting three staff members of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as well as a reporter and a cameraman from the Israeli daily, *Haaretz*. These acts of aggression by Israeli settlers have been encouraged by the consistent Israeli policy of rewarding settler violence and abuse through further protection and financial assistance to continue their illegal settlement of occupied Palestinian land. This is in addition to the increased military presence to protect the armed settlers while they repeat these rampages throughout the West Bank against defenceless Palestinian civilians.

On 3 August 2007, during an incursion in southern Gaza, Israeli occupation tanks entered by force the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Al Shouka Elementary Co-educational School causing damage and turning the school into a detention centre. This action by Israeli occupying forces is not only in violation of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, to which Israel is a party, but it also manifests the occupation's disdain towards United Nations property and personnel. One day earlier, the Israeli occupation forces carried out a full day incursion in Beit Lahia, in the north of the Gaza Strip, killing two Palestinians and injuring eight others, including a child. The occupation forces also bulldozed a large area of agricultural land and farms, uprooting over 120 dunums of olive and citrus trees.

Israel, the occupying Power, has also continued its illegal policy of extrajudicial executions against Palestinians. Aside from being an illegal policy and one that violates the most basic principle of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, this policy has always caused immeasurable harm to civilian areas and has spread fear, death and chaos in residential neighbourhoods across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. On 4 August, two Israeli missiles struck a car and a truck driving in Rafah in the Southern Gaza Strip. A Palestine civilian, who happened to be walking in the area at the time of the strike, was killed and 15 others were injured. One day earlier, Israeli occupation forces death squads carried out another extrajudicial execution in the old city of Nablus, killing Ra'ed Abu-ela'das.

The devastating effect of this reprehensible illegal policy cannot be overstated. In addition, the continuation of extrajudicial executions by the occupation forces casts a serious shadow of doubt over the commitment of the Israeli Government towards peace and international law. These aggressive military measures are directly undermining all international and Palestinian efforts to move towards peace in the region.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 290 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 26 July 2007 (A/ES-10/394-S/2007/459), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as an official document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer